

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 10 and 11 are now present in this application. Claims 3, 6 and 7 are independent.

Claims 3, 6 and 7 have been amended. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd Paragraph

Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 10 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd Paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner has set forth certain instances wherein the claim language is not clearly understood.

The Examiner states that the phrases “a coating material capable of being readily abraded or separated by the chain” in claim 3, and “a coating that is readily abraded or separated using the chain” in claim 7 render the claims indefinite. The Examiner correctly notes that the term “readily” is a relative term, but this does not necessarily render the claim indefinite.

In order to overcome this rejection, Applicants have amended claims 3, 6 and 7 to delete the limitation incorporating the term “readily.” Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 10 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over van Rooji in view of Urata. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Complete discussions of the Examiner’s rejections are set forth in the Office Action, and are not being repeated here.

The Examiner states that van Rooji discloses a chain having a plurality of link plates including through holes. The Examiner recognizes that van Rooji does not disclose a coating material that is readily abraded or separated and relies upon Urata for allegedly disclosing this

feature and concludes that it would have been obvious to use the coating of Urata with the chain of van Rooji. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 6 has been amended to recite a combination of steps in a method of manufacturing a power transmission chain including a plurality of link plates individually including through-holes and arranged as mutually overlapped in a thicknesswise direction thereof on their side surfaces, and a plurality of pins inserted through the through-holes for flexibly interconnecting the plurality of link plates, the method comprising a coating step of coating the side surfaces of each of the plurality of link plates with a coating material having reduced contact surface pressure against an adjacent link plate to a proper level by abrading the contact surface through a test-driving process of the chain after assembly of the link plates are mutually overlapped with a surface pressure higher than a proper surface pressure for the chain, a pin lay-out step of laying out the plurality of pins at a predetermined pitch, and an interconnection step of inserting the plurality of pins so arranged into the through-holes thereby sequentially interconnecting the link plates which are mutually overlapped on their side surfaces.

Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 6 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including van Rooji and Urata.

Claim 6 now recites a coating step of coating the side surfaces of each of the plurality of link plates with a coating material having reduced contact surface pressure against an adjacent link plate to a proper level by abrading the contact surface through a test-driving process of the chain after assembly of the link plates are mutually overlapped with a surface pressure higher than a proper surface pressure for the chain.

The claim now recites a process for adjusting the contact surface pressure between the link plates by a test driving process. The test driving process causes abrading that causes the surface pressure to be reduced from a pressure that is higher than a proper surface pressure. Method claim 7 has been amended in a similar manner to claim 6. Additionally, apparatus claim 3 has been amended in a similar manner to recite a product-by-process claim by reciting that each of the link plates has side surfaces covered by a coating material having reduced contact

surface pressure against an adjacent link plate to a proper level by abrading the contact surface through a test-driving process of the chain after assembly of the link plates are mutually overlapped with a surface pressure higher than a proper surface pressure for the chain. The structure resulting from the process recited in the product-by-process claim defines the invention over the prior art.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combinations of elements as set forth in independent claims 3, 6 and 7 are not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including van Rooji and Urata, for the reasons explained above. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

With regard to dependent claims 4, 10 and 11, Applicants submit that these claims depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 3 which is allowable for the reasons set forth above, and therefore claims 4, 10 and 11 are allowable. In addition, these claims recite further limitations which are not disclosed or made obvious by the applied prior art references. Reconsideration and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

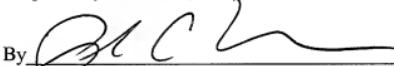
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Christopher J. McDonald, Registration No. 41,533 at the telephone number of the undersigned below to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees required during the pendency of the above-identified application or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448.

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Respectfully submitted,

By


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